

350 COMMENTARY ON MACAULAY'S
HISTORY

health enough for great affairs—discomforts and difficulties did not count. He must go on to the end for the sake of the cause.

By the close of 1689, as Macaulay points out,¹ William was thoroughly disgusted with the Whigs on account of their factiousness and their desire to limit the power of the Crown and the executive. He was gradually making up his mind to a change of system. If it was impossible to create a middle party consisting of the sensible and moderate elements of both parties, he would make the experiment of trusting the Tories.

This is clearly revealed in the conversations with Halifax. William 'ever told me he was a Trimmer'. His natural inclination therefore was to endeavour to combine the moderate men of both parties. In August he concluded

¹ there was nothing to be done, but to form a party between the 2 extreames/ In January 1690 he said that hee would continue to be a Trimmer, but upon discourse of the next meeting of a Parliament, hee said that though hee should seem to declare for one party more than for another, if his kindnesse was not answered, hee could take the others by the hand/ Halifax answered that the experiment was doubtful and dangerous. So in February 1690 William began to court the Tories. ' He said hee wished, hee could trimme a little longer, but things pressed so,

hee could not/
 In January he felt that^f it was dangerous to
 trust the High
 Tories', but- as Halifax adds in a note, ' that
 inclination
 changed since/² By dissolving the
 Convention Parlia-
 ment in February 1690 William broke with the
 Whigs and
 threw himself upon the support of the Tories,
 or rather the
 moderate men of both parties. It was
 hazardous but it
 seemed the only resource.

¹IV, 1791-2 (xv).

* Halifax, ii. 229, 244, 247, 243.